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Upon examining and comparing the original authorities, we have been struck alike with the extent of our author's research, his keen historic insight, the thoroughness of his scholarship, and the trustworthiness of his conclusions. The book is worthy of the high place which Mr. Freeman holds in the estimation of English scholars. He is an examiner in the School of Modern History and Law at Oxford, and, by his writings on various topics of Grecian, Roman, and mediæval history, has given proof of great study and of conscientious handling of facts. His style is clear and forcible, and not wanting in picturesqueness, whenever he is willing to depart from what is necessarily his usual function,—that of a calm, impartial critic of constitutions and laws. Let him complete his great task in the same spirit in which he has begun it, and he will have enriched historical literature with one of its most original works and most valuable treasures.

12. — *The Gayworthys: a Story of Threads and Thrums.* By the Author of "Faith Gartney's Girlhood." Boston: Loring, Publisher. 1865. pp. 399.

THIS book appears to have been suggested by a fanciful theory of life, which the author embodies in a somewhat over-figurative preface, and which recurs throughout the story at intervals, like a species of refrain. The theory in question amounts to neither more nor less than this: that life is largely made up of broken threads, of plans arrested in their development, of hopes untimely crushed. This idea is neither very new nor very profound; but the novel formula under which it is shadowed forth on the title-page will probably cause it to strike many well-disposed minds as for the first time. In a story written in the interest of a theory two excellent things are almost certain to be spoiled. It might seem, indeed, that it would be a very small figure of a story that could be injured by a theory like the present one; but when once an author has his dogma at heart, unless he is very much of an artist, it is sure to become obtrusive at the capital moment, and to remind the reader that he is, after all, learning a moral lesson. The slightly ingenious and very superficial figure in which the author embodies her philosophy recurs with a frequency which is truly impertinent.

Our story is organized upon three main threads, which, considering the apparent force of the author's conviction, are on the whole very tenderly handled; inasmuch as, although two of them are at moments drawn so tight that we are fully prepared for the final snap and the quiet triumph of the author's "I told you so," yet only one of them is

really severed past all repair. This catastrophe symbolizes the fate of Miss Rebecca Gayworthy, who cherishes a secret flame for her pastor, the Rev. Jordan King. Mr. King, in turn, entertains a passion for another young lady, whom he marries, but who is not all for him that Miss Gayworthy would have been. The broken thread here is Miss Gayworthy's slighted regard for Mr. King.

There are two other pairs of lovers whose much shifting relations fill up the rest of the book. Miss Joanna Gayworthy is gifted, for her misfortune, with a lively tongue and an impetuous temper. She is kept for a number of years the subject of one of those gratuitous misconceptions in which lady novelists delight. To our mind there is quite as much of the comical as of the pathetic in her misunderstanding with Gabriel Hartshorne. Both she and her lover seem bent on fixing the *minimum* of words with which a courtship can be conducted, and the utmost possible impertinence of those words. They fall the natural victims to their own ingenuity. The fault, however, is more with him than with her. If she was a little too much of a coquette, he was far too little of an enthusiast. Women have a prescriptive right to answer indirectly at serious moments; but men labor under a prescriptive obligation at these moments to speak and act to the point. We cannot but think that Gabriel obtained his mistress quite as soon as he had won her.

Of the parties yet mentioned, however, neither is to be taken for the hero and heroine proper; for in the presence of the inevitable, the orthodox little girl, — this time, fortunately, matched not with a condescending man of the world, but with a lad of her own age, — in the presence, we say, of these heroic figures, who shall dare to claim that distinction? Sarah Gair and Gershom Vorse are brought up together in the fields, like another Daphnis and Chloe. Gershom is sent to sea by the machinations of Sarah's mother, who has a quasi-prophetic insight into what may be. Sarah blossoms into young ladyhood, and Gershom obtains command of a vessel. In the course of time he comes home, but, we regret to say, with little of the breezy gallantry of his profession. For long years his old playmate has worn his image upon her heart of hearts. He utterly fails to take cognizance of her attachment, and in fact snubs her most unmercifully. Thrums again, as you see. It is perhaps hard to overstate the possibilities of man's insensibility as opposed to woman's cunning devotion. But the whole picture of Gershom Vorse strikes us as ill-conceived; and yet those who remember Tom Tulliver in "The Mill on the Floss" will acknowledge that much can be made in a dramatic way of the figure of the rational, practical, honest, prejudiced youth whose responsibilities begin early. It is perhaps

natural that Gershom Vorse's contempt for the mother should have predisposed him against the daughter ; but why should he nurse so unmanly an intolerance of all her little woman's graces? If Sarah was really a perfect young lady, she was too good for this grim and precocious Puritan. He despises her because, being a young lady, she looks and dresses like one, because she wears "puffed muslin and dainty boots." Out upon him! What should he care about such things? That this trait is not manly, we need not affirm ; but it is the reverse of masculine.

It is hardly worth while, however, to criticise details in an episode which is so radically defective as this one. Its radical defect is the degradation of sentiment by making children responsible for it. This practice is becoming the bane of our novels. It signifies little where it began, or what authority it claims : it is, in our opinion, as fatal to the dignity of serious feeling and to the grandeur of strong passions as the most flagrant immoralities of French fiction. Heaven defend us from the puerile ! If we desire to read about children, we shall not be at loss : the repertory of juvenile works is vast. But if we desire to learn the various circumstances under which love-making may be conducted, let us not repair to the nursery and the school-room. A man's childhood and his manhood can never, without a violation of truth, be made the same story ; much less may the youth and maturity of a woman. In "*The Gayworthys*" the loves of the two young people are far too exclusively projected from their infancy. The age for Daphnis and Chloe has passed. Passion and sentiment must always be more or less intelligent not to shock the public taste. There are, of course, few things so charming as the innocence of childhood, just as there are few things so interesting as the experience of manhood. But they cannot in a love-story be successfully combined. Thackeray's great genius was insufficient to prevent the fruition of Henry Esmond's boyish devotion from seeming very disagreeable. Every reader feels that, if he had had the story to write, *that* should not have been its consummation. There is in the experience of every man and woman a certain proportion of sensations which are interesting only to themselves. To this class of feelings we would refer the childish reminiscences held in common by two persons who at the age of discretion unite their destinies. A man seldom falls in love with the young girl who has grown up at his side ; he either likes or dislikes her too much. But when he does, it is from quite a new stand-point and with a new range of feelings. He does not woo her in the name of their juvenile *escapades*. These are pretty only in after years, when there is no other poetry to be had. And they are, therefore, quite apart from the purposes of the serious novelist.

So much for the faults of "The Gayworthys." Let us now pay the tribute of an explicit recognition to its very great cleverness. Without this quality no novel in these days can hope to succeed. But "The Gayworthys" has even more of it than is needed for success. How many accomplishments the would-be successful novel demands! and how many are here displayed! When we count them over, indeed, we are half amazed at our temerity in offering these prosy strictures. The observation, the memory, the invention, the fancy, the humor, the love of human nature, lavished upon these four hundred pages are the results almost of an education. Let us, we repeat, make them a very low bow. They contain much that is admirable and much that is powerful. It is for this reason that, when we see them misused, as it seems to us, conjoined with what is vulgar and false, we make a respectful protest. We know not whether in this case their union makes a total which we may properly call genius; but it at all events makes a force sufficiently like genius not to be able with impunity to work in ignorance of principle. We do not claim to have laid down any principles. They are already laid down in a thousand consummate works of art. All we wish to do here — all we have space to do — is to remind the author of "The Gayworthys" that they exist.

13. — *What I saw on the West Coast of South and North America and at the Hawaiian Islands.* By H. WILLIS BAXLEY, M. D. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1865. 8vo. pp. 632.

THIS volume consists of an indifferent guide-book of the cities and their neighborhood on the west coast of America, with some personal experiences, never amounting to adventure, connected by a narrative upon which the picturesqueness or majesty of the wonderful scenes of nature amongst which it leads have left not a trace. We have never met with a traveller who had seen less of the things which passed before his eyes, or who was more thoroughly disqualified by preconceived notions from seeing in general than Dr. Baxley. His virtuous soul was possessed with one dazzling, blinding idea. Whatever he saw while travelling in South America and the Sandwich Islands, and whatever he did not see, alike nourished his confidence in the superiority of the Caucasian race, the intensity of his "loathing" of all mongrelism, and his sense of the loveliness, naturalness, and even the divinity of that subordination of the inferior races to the superior, for which, on one or two occasions, he finds a word which expresses his idea exactly, and that word is slavery. In the absence of the refreshing prospect afforded by that institution, he